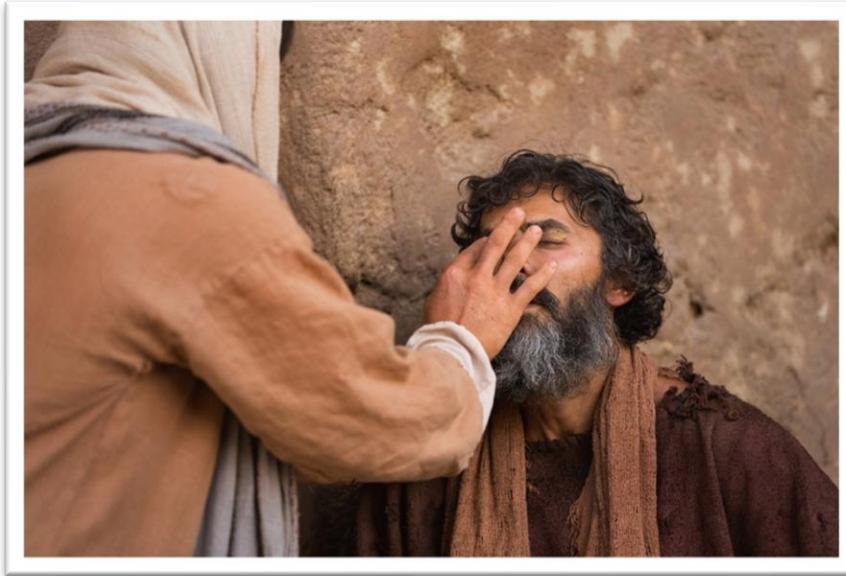


Saint James Lutheran Church
 March 15, 2026
Fourth Sunday in Lent



I was blind and now I see

The Rev. John Locke

704-530-9969 (cell)
 1424 Morganton Rd.
 PO Box 53276
 Fayetteville, NC 28305

JPL406@gmail.com
 910-484-8052 (office)
www.saintjamesfay.org

Musician: Alyssa Hall

Worship Leaders		
	March 15	March 22
Assisting Minister	Jane Boelke	Jacky Hummel
Lectors	Beverly Beale	Rick Black
Communion Assistant	Jacky Hummel	Jaye-Lynn Orellano
Ushers	John & Gayle Frinak	Sharon VanPelt, Ed Samuelian
Greeter	Fran DeSilva	Gayle & John Frinak
Acolyte	Ian Gibson	Aaron Thomas
Rover	Dave Runkle	Verena & Christopher Min
Nursery	Verena Min, Kathy Brown	Amber Habermehl, Erika Stockwell

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PRELUDE

Alyssa Hall

WORDS OF WELCOME

A MINISTRY MOMENT

WORSHIP VOLUNTARY

We stand

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who forgives all our sin,
whose mercy endures forever.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin before God, who removes our guilt
and blots out all offenses.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Gracious God ... **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For seeking worldly delights that deceive us and dishonor you,
Gracious God ... **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For desiring self-reliance instead of hungering for your word:
Gracious God ... **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For failing to recognize your coming reign,
and for hindering the work of the Spirit:
Gracious God ... **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For drawing from the well of self-serving ambition,
and for disdainning the living water Christ offers:
Gracious God ... **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For disregarding voices from the margin,
and for distrusting signs of your healing and hope in the world:
Gracious God ... **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

For dwelling in tombs of self-pity and discontent,
and for disregarding Christ's call to come forth to life:
Gracious God ... **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

God's steadfast love, grace, and forgiveness abound.
Through faith, the free gift of God,
you have been clothed in the righteousness of Christ.
In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.

The Spirit of the One who raised Christ from the dead dwells in you,
pours God's love into your hearts, and gives you life and peace.
Amen.

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray together.

Bend your ear to our prayers, Lord Christ, and come among us. By your gracious life and death for us, bring light into the darkness of our hearts, and anoint us with your Spirit, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

We sit.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

CHILDREN'S TIME

Following Children's Time, children are invited to go downstairs for an adult supervised activity time. They will return to the sanctuary during the Hymn of The Day.

FIRST READING 1 Samuel 16:1-13

¹ The Lord said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul? I have rejected him from being king over Israel. Fill your horn with oil and set out; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons." ² Samuel said, "How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me." And the Lord said, "Take a heifer with you and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.'" ³ Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what you shall do, and you shall anoint for me the one whom I name to you." ⁴ Samuel did what the Lord commanded and came to Bethlehem. The elders of the city came to meet him trembling and said, "Do you come peaceably?" ⁵ He said, "Peaceably. I have come to sacrifice to the Lord; sanctify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." And he sanctified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice. ⁶ When they came, he looked on Eliab and thought, "Surely his anointed is now before the Lord." ⁷ But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him, for the Lord does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart." ⁸ Then Jesse called Abinadab and made him pass before Samuel. He said, "Neither has the Lord chosen this one." ⁹ Then Jesse made Shammah pass by. And he said, "Neither has the Lord chosen this one." ¹⁰ Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, and Samuel said to Jesse, "The Lord has not chosen any of these." ¹¹ Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all your sons here?" And he said, "There remains yet the youngest, but he is keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him, for we will not sit down until he comes here." ¹² He sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy and had beautiful eyes and was handsome. The Lord said, "Rise and anoint him, for this is the one." ¹³ Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward. Samuel then set out and went to Ramah.

The word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL The Holy Gospel according to John **Glory to you, O Lord.**

John 9:1-41

¹ As [Jesus] walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. ² His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” ³ Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him. ⁴ We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. ⁵ As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” ⁶ When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes, ⁷ saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. ⁸ The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?” ⁹ Some were saying, “It is he.” Others were saying, “No, but it is someone like him.” He kept saying, “I am he.” ¹⁰ But they kept asking him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” ¹¹ He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ Then I went and washed and received my sight.” ¹² They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

¹³ They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴ Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵ Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, “He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.” ¹⁶ Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not observe the Sabbath.” Others said, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?” And they were divided. ¹⁷ So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.” He said, “He is a prophet.”

¹⁸ The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight ¹⁹ and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?” ²⁰ His parents answered, “We know that this is our son and that he was born blind, ²¹ but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.” ²² His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. ²³ Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

²⁴ So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, “Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.” ²⁵ He answered, “I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.” ²⁶ They said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?” ²⁷ He answered them, “I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?” ²⁸ Then they reviled him, saying, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹ We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.” ³⁰ The man answered, “Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. ³¹ We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. ³² Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. ³³ If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” ³⁴ They answered him, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?” And they drove him out.

³⁵ Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” ³⁶ He answered, “And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.” ³⁷ Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.” ³⁸ He said, “Lord, I believe.” And he worshiped him. ³⁹ Jesus said, “I came into this world for judgment, so that those who do not see may see and those who do see may become blind.” ⁴⁰ Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard this and said to him, “Surely we are not blind, are we?” ⁴¹ Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

We sit.

SERMON

Pastor John

We stand.

HYMN OF THE DAY *Be Thou My Vision* ELW 793

APOSTLES CREED

We join with the Great Communion of Saints in confessing our faith, using the words of the Apostles Creed.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ,
God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the
living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

(Names of those on the congregation's prayer list are listed in the back of the bulletin)

Each portion of the prayers ends with these words:

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

PEACE

The peace of God be with you always.

And also with you.

We share this peace as a sign of our baptismal unity as children of God. The "exchange of peace" (also commonly called "sharing the peace" or "passing the peace") is an act of reconciliation that serves as a transition point between the Word and Meal portions of the liturgy.

We sit.

OFFERING

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.



Support of the ministries of St. James, as well as the wider church, is appreciated. To donate with cash or check use an envelope from the back of the pew or scan the QR code to donate digitally. Thank you for your generosity.



OFFERORY / ANTHEM *Simply Amazing Grace* Adult Choir

We stand.

OFFERING PRAYER

O God, maker of heaven and earth,
your steadfast love embraces all creation.
You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth
and bring forth its bounty.
Through these gifts of bread and wine,
draw us into the death and life of your Son,
who calls us to bear witness to his saving work.
We ask this in Jesus' name.
Amen.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.
You call your people to cleanse their hearts
and prepare with joy for the paschal feast,
that, renewed in the gift of baptism,
we may come to the fullness of your grace.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (ELW setting 8)



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry, full of your glo-ry. Ho -
san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high -
est. Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Blessed are you, O God of the universe.
Your mercy is everlasting
and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth.
Praise to you for saving the earth from the waters of the flood.
Praise to you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea.
Praise to you for leading your people through the wilderness
to the land of milk and honey.
Praise to you for the words and deeds of Jesus, your anointed one.
Praise to you for the death and resurrection of Christ.
Praise to you for your Spirit poured out on all nations.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

With your holy ones of all times and places,
with the earth and all its creatures,
with sun and moon and stars,
we praise you, O God,
blessed and holy Trinity,
now and forever.
Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER *(Modern Version)*

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**Our Father in heaven
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

THE HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come to the table.
Feast on God's goodness and mercy.
Thanks be to God.

The assembly may be seated.

COMMUNION INSTRUCTIONS

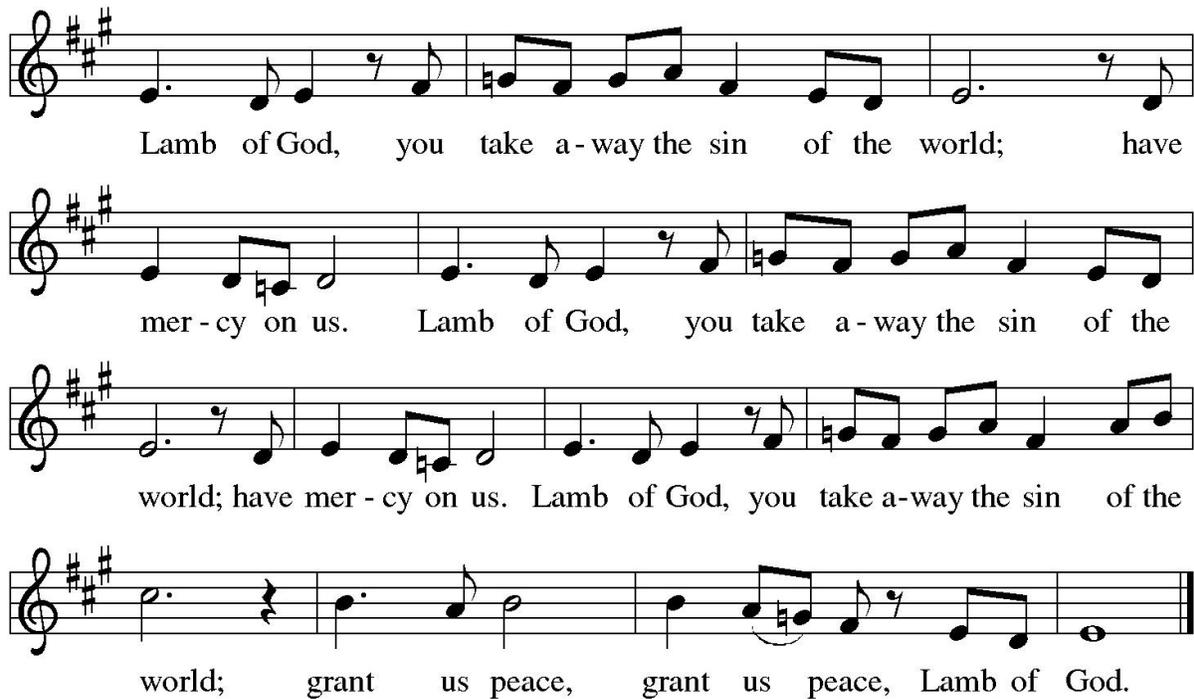
All are welcome at Holy Communion. Lutherans believe that Jesus' real presence is in, under, and through the bread and wine. The sacrament is effective in either bread or wine, so if you have an issue with either bread or wine, you may commune with one element. Grape juice and gluten-free wafers are available for those who prefer. We will distribute bread and wine by individual cup. Children and others not communing may fold arms across their chest, and they will receive a blessing from the communion minister.

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say
The body of Christ, given for you.
The blood of Christ, shed for you.
and each person may respond **Amen.**

COMMUNION SONGS

Lamb of God (Setting 8)



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; grant us peace, grant us peace, Lamb of God.

I Received the Living God ELW 477
You satisfy the Hungry Heart ELW 484

We remain seated.

TABLE BLESSING

May the body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His Grace. Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God of our salvation,
we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls,
reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey.
Through the body and blood of your Son,
may we become Christ's body in the world,
bearing witness to your love for all creation,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

We stand.

BLESSING

Receive the blessing of the holy Trinity:
God, who calls all things into existence,
Jesus Christ, who redeems us,
and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation,
✠ bless you now and always.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN *In The Cross of Christ I Glory* ELW 324

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Believe the good news.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE



CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER CONCERNS

March 15, 2026

The list in the weekly bulletin is intended to be for persons in immediate crisis. Generally, those names will be moved to the newsletter after 3 weeks. The newsletter has our long-term prayer list which is updated as you tell us.

Members · Beth Sessoms · Stella San Miguel · Larry Schiebe · Georgette Miller · Avery Walker
· Philip Williams · Anna Lena Andersen · Gary Eissinger

Friends & Family

· Simone Ryan · Diane Stultz · Peter Lundell · Chrissy Tyndall · Gregg Nazario · Sandy Pangle
· Stasha · Alan Carlson · Katie Maxwell · Chuck Warren · Darcey Beale · Pat Earle
· Ming Drogos · Charlotte Choice and family · The family of Faye Zimmerman Cashwell

People at Home or in Care facilities: · Charlotte Davis · Brenda Killett · Carolyn Uchtorff

Our military members (*deployed)

· Earl Stockham · Dan Gibson · Joshua Trogdon* · Bella Fish · Hochang Min
· Alex Habermehl · Robert James · Matthew Porter* · Derek Carlson · Howard Hogan*

Ministry at St. James ... March 15 - 22, 2026

Sun. Mar 15

Fourth Sunday in Lent

9:00 am Sunday Morning Faith Formation (Sunday School)
10:00 am Worship
11:30 am Choir Practice

Mon. Mar 16

9:00 am Quilters (Annex)
10:00 am Finance Ministry Team (Office Conference Room) **RESCHEDULED**
6:00 pm Cub Scout Den Meeting

Tue. Mar 17

7:00 pm Boy Scouts Troop 747 Meeting
7:00 pm Fellowship on Zoom

Wed. Mar 18

12:00 pm Lenten Lunch & Worship
5:45 pm Lenten Meal
6:00 pm Cub Scouts Leaders Meeting (Room 127)
6:30 pm Lenten Vespers

Sat. Mar 21

7:30 am Honeycutt Park Clean up (325 Devers Street) – All welcome
8:30 am Property Work Day (on Saint James Campus)

Sun. Mar 22

Fifth Sunday in Lent

9:00 am Sunday Morning Faith Formation (Sunday School)
10:00 am Worship
11:30 am Choir Practice
2:00 pm Crop Hunger Walk



Join our Nursery Volunteers!



We need a few adults who can volunteer in our nursery on Sunday. We will screen anyone interested with a *SafeGatherings* background check, before they can participate. The children will go downstairs after “Children’s Time” just before the sermon and return during the Hymn of the Day after the sermon. Contact Michelle at the office: 910-484-8052 / saintjameslutheran@gmail.com



Our mid-week vespers devotions will focus on several aspects of life:

Mortality (Mar 18) (Do we fear death? How do we grieve and mourn the loss of a loved one? How does a congregation deal with the loss of key leader(s)? How do we plan for so that others do not have extra burdens?)

Each of these topics have an impact on our lives from the very beginning of our lives; we can have long discussions about them: our anxieties, fears, anger, worry, longings, jealousies, etc. ... and we can do it without ever including God, faith, or the church in the content of our discussions. We'll contemplate these topics from a faith perspective, as we face the various fears, truths, or trust concerns we might have. How do we hear the words of Jesus in the midst of challenges?

Through conversation, prayer, study, and meditation, we'll listen for God's directions, forgiveness, and strength. Each week we'll end our vespers with Holden Evening Prayer.

You are encouraged to come, enjoy a meal, fellowship, and grow in faith and strength.



Beginning Wednesday
Meal at 5:45 pm. Vespers at 6:25 pm

Lenten Meal Menu

Fellowship is asking your assistance for some of the meals planned for Lenten suppers on Wednesday evenings. Please consider donating food or your time to help. **Sign up sheets** will be available in the Gathering space or contact Ruth Ann Crecelius.

March 18 Taco bar (provided by Fellowship)

March 25 Soup and sandwiches

The GOOD SHEPHERD-40 days of comfort

Fleece comes from sheep. Shepherds tend to sheep.
During Lent we will use fleece to honor our SHEPHERD.



In March of 2019 Marcia Katt was informed the Child Advocacy Center needed "comfort blankets". Comfort blankets are given to children at the end of a forensic interview. Our first donation was made during the April 2019 Prime Time meeting. Since our first donation several "work days" to make "comfort blankets" have been held. Numerous church members, family members and friends have helped.

We try to be good stewards of our fleece fabric. Squares of fleece are removed before the blankets are tied. Those squares are donated to schools to be used either as erasers for white boards or put on the legs of chairs to prevent scraping of the floors. If we receive pieces of fleece that aren't big enough for "comfort blankets" we make either scarves or shawls. These are donated to nursing homes or areas where they will help people stay warm.

If you have any size pieces of fleece you would like to donate, we will put it to good use.

During the 40 days of Lent we will donate 40 "comfort blankets".
That means 40 children will know the SHEPHERD knows them and knows how special they are.

As of February 18, 2026 1,840 "comfort blankets" have been donated to the Child Advocacy Center that were made by church members, family members and friends.

Questions?
Marcia Katt 910-322-8037





Walk. Give. Change the world.

Cumberland - Fayetteville
CROP Hunger Walk

Sunday, March 22, 2026
2pm - 5pm

First Baptist Church
201 Anderson St., Fayetteville

crophungerwalk.org/cumberlandcountync

crophungerwalk.org

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AN INVITATION TO DRAW CLOSER TO GOD

Forty is a number that appears in the Bible many times.

The rains of the great flood lasted for 40 days and nights.

Moses spent 40 days and nights fasting on Mount Sinai.

The children of Israel spent 40 years wandering in the wilderness.

These are only a few examples, but the commonality is that 40 depicts a time of testing and teaching in the Bible. During the 40 days of this Lenten season we have a beautiful opportunity to make space in our lives for repentance, prayer, and generosity. Consider how God might use your time and resources to serve those in need.

PRACTICE 40 MINUTES OF SILENCE EACH DAY

Find God in the stillness by stepping away from the noise and chaos of the day. Light a candle, make yourself comfortable and be present with God.

BE IN PRAYER FOR 40 PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE

Deepen your connection with God by turning the focus to others and find what God has done for us in Christ. Small notebooks are available for you for this Lenten discipline.

DONATE 40 TOYS AND CHILDREN'S BOOKS FOR CAPE FEAR VALLEY MEDICAL CENTER (As a congregation)

There are children in the hospital that have special circumstances and no resources for small items to pass the time. We are specifically collecting NEW

- Coloring books and crayons
- Puzzles (no more than 200 pieces)
- Uno card games
- Sticker books
- Fidgets
- Children's books for ages 8-14

DONATE 40 ITEM PER WEEK TO THE ALMS HOUSE (as a congregation)

Help to ensure access to healthy food and hygiene products for those in our community.

- 15 March Instant potatoes
- 22 March Deodorant
- 29 March Toothpaste

In this 40-day season God allows us time to grow in our understanding of and appreciation for the sacrifice Jesus made on our behalf. On our journey through the wilderness our hearts will rejoice even more in the feast that God has prepared for us in the resurrection.

If you have any questions please contact Ruth Ann Crecelius